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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 25 September 1992, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. GANEV (Bulgaria)

later: Mr. CETIN (Turkey)
(Vice-President)

- Address by Mr. Anatolijs Gorbunovs, Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia

- Address by Mr. Sixto Durán Ballén, President of the Republic of Ecuador

- Address by Mr. Eduard A. Shevardnadze, Chairman of the Council of State of the Republic of Georgia

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- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by

Mr. Moravcik (Czechoslovakia)
Mr. Moussa (Egypt)

The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. ANATOLIJS GORBUNOVS, CHAIRMAN OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia.

Mr. Anatolijs Gorbunovs, Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, His Excellency Mr. Anatolijs Gorbunovs, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Chairman GORBUNOVS (spoke in Latvian; English text furnished by the delegation): Please accept Latvia's congratulations on your election to the presidency of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, Sir. The people of Latvia wish you a successful term as its leader.

Latvia wishes to pay its respects to those nation States which have recently been admitted to the United Nations and looks forward to coooperation with them.

More than a year has passed since the Republic of Latvia, with the support of the world's democracies, restored its independence. This past year has been characterized by the renewal of our State institutions. The restoration of independence is a complicated process during which we have learned from our mistakes. Our own experience and that of other nations has contributed to making the transition process more effective.

The goal of independent Latvia - to become a democratic free market State - has not changed. Unchanged also are Latvia's efforts simultaneouly to

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find an optimal solution to two acute and unavoidable problems: the correction of the injustices fostered by the illegal occupation and the protection of the rights of all residents of Latvia.

The majority of States never recognized the annexation of Latvia. This was of vital significance for the restoration of our independence. It is only now that we have begun fully to understand the complexity of our situation. The stabilization and development of our independence is largely dependent on the objectivity with which the consequences of the former colonial policies are evaluated and on the manner in which they are eliminated.

I would even say that in the recent past the restoration of independence in the Baltic States was of the utmost importance for security and stability in Europe. Today the international appraisal of the consequences of the annexation is just as crucial. A flawed approach to this question, which would legitimize these consequences, could severely destabilize the political situation in Latvia.

But now I invite representatives to take a fundamental and unprejudiced look at the consequences of the half-century-long illegal incorporation of Latvia into the Soviet empire.

Foreign military troops are still stationed on the territory of Latvia. Moreover, the Latvian Government has been denied the right to monitor these forces. The lack of control over this army, its sometimes chaotic demobilization, and its wilful and covert merging with economic enterprises and civil institutions in Latvia, create the threat of unsupervised arms transfers, even to international markets.

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Today there is no other nation State in the world with as many active or retired military persons per civilian as in Latvia. Our small nation has been pressured to provide social guarantees, including living accommodation, to the military forces of a great Power upon their withdrawal from Latvia. Meanwhile, Latvians who were deported to Siberia on a mass scale in 1941 and 1949 are still unable to find housing in their homeland. Latvians who fled to the West as a result of oppression by the former occupation regime, and who now wish to return to their native land, are also unable to find accommodation.

The great neighbouring Power also attempts to determine the political basis of our State - the composition of its body of citizens.

We welcome the adherence of the Russian Federation to the Helsinki Document of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, particularly paragraph 15, in which the participating States committed themselves to end the

> "stationing of foreign armed forces on the territories of the Baltic States without the required consent of those countries." (A/47/361, annex, para. 15)

In our turn, we can affirm the willingness of Latvia to see that the commitment expressed in this paragraph is fulfilled in our negotiations with the Russian Federation. Unfortunately, to date we have not seen similar interest on the part of Russia.

It is a matter of concern that the view has been expressed in the Parliament of the Russian Federation that the agreement already concluded on the withdrawal of troops from Lithuania should be annulled. In the negotiations with Latvia, the Russian delegation is constantly changing its position - even on matters previously agreed upon.

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Therefore Latvia, together with Estonia and Lithuania, requested that the issue of the complete withdrawal of foreign military forces be included on the agenda of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly. Latvia also invites the Security Council to send observers to the negotiations with the Russian Federation, and is looking forward to the other party's consent.

Aside from the serious issue of foreign military forces in Latvia, one of the most serious consequences of the annexation of Latvia is the dangerous alteration of the demographic situation as a result of forced migration and the Soviet Union's colonial policies.

In the last 50 years no other State has had its indigenous population reduced to the status of a near minority as a result of both immigration and the loss of a large part of its indigenous population during occupations by two criminal regimes, Communist and Nazi. Latvia must now devote great efforts to preserving its State language, the major component of Latvian culture and heritage.

Another truth is becoming more transparent. We cannot utilize only existing schemes and models to solve our internal problems. Our unique demographic situation requires us to solve the citizenship question with respect to immigrants - on the one hand, to create a secure environment to preserve our national identity, and on the other to give immigrants every opportunity to integrate into Latvia's society while preserving and developing their own languages and cultural traditions.

The State of Latvia, of course, is interested in expanding its body of citizens, but not with retired officers of the former Soviet army who, even now, do not recognize the independence of Latvia. There are other States from

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which the armed forces of the former Soviet Union are being withdrawn but the possibility of granting the citizenship of these States to former Soviet officers has not been an issue.

The current domestic debate suggests that the Latvian Parliament adopt a law on citizenship in which the principal criteria for granting citizenship would be a 10-year residency and a basic knowledge of Latvian. Such a law, if accepted by a referendum of citizens, would have legal force. Currently, all permanent residents of Latvia are being registered and are being given the opportunity freely to declare their intention to become citizens of Latvia or to remain citizens of another State which is their country of birth. Furthermore, the laws of Latvia guarantee, according to international standards, each individual's human rights, which quite frequently, consciously or unconsciously, are confused with the right to citizenship.

Some political forces in Latvia have requested that decolonization policies be carried out. The notion of a colonized country in twentieth-century Europe may seem strange. However, an examination of evidence provided by 50 years of annexation suggests the possible validity of this notion.

When referring to decolonization, in no case do we imply that all immigrants must or will leave Latvia. However, our internal situation requires clarity on the very important question of who must leave Latvia. First, the former Soviet military forces must leave. Secondly, all those foreign citizens to whom the existence of an independent Latvia is unacceptable must leave. Thirdly, those who wish to live among members of a single ethnic group, in Russia or elsewhere, will leave on their own initiative. However, the great majority of immigrants will stay in Latvia, and our desire is that they be integrated into our society.

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In regard to the protection of human rights in Latvia, we wish to follow examples found in independent and democratic States: the indigenous people, Latvians, should have the same rights as similar groups in other States, whereas minority and immigrant groups should have cultural autonomy, including opportunities to use and develop their language.

We reject the accusations, made here by the Russian Federation, that the rights of minorities are being violated in Latvia. We are ready to have our human rights situation examined by experts of the Commission on Human Rights.

We are linking our hopes with the experiences of States that have travelled the road of decolonization, and from these States we expect understanding and support. The economic reforms, which have brought good results to many of these States, are very attractive and can be used by us.

The situation in the world, especially in Europe, is changing qualitatively. In the past, the world order was dictated by the great Powers - or, to be more precise, by military-political blocs created by the great Powers. For better or for worse, this system worked, even if through mutual fear rather than mutual trust.

The stated goal of the former world order was the maintenance of world peace and stability. Contradictory or delayed actions are not the best means of increasing stability. The international recognition of Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina was delayed precisely because of such considerations; the tragic consequences of such a delay are still with us today.

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In international relations there exist problems of yet a different nature, problems related to the unification of nations as well as to the representation in the world community of sovereign parts of a divided nation. The Government of the Republic of China in Taiwan has been created by the tides of history. In our opinion, the international community has been unfair in ignoring this fact. Does not international experience bear evidence that participation in the international community by two sovereign parts of one nation provides an opportunity for a productive dialogue between these parts?

The United Nations must pay attention to the problems of both large and small States. In our opinion, the security of small States should be a central concern of the Organization, since there does not exist a balance of power or agreement on goals between small States and their larger neighbours at this time.

In my opinion, when discussing the relationships between nations, one must remember that there are neither great nor small nations. A nation is only as great as its will. Large and small States, however, can be equally free even if not equally powerful.

We place high hopes in the United Nations.

Latvia values highly the documents of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in particular "Agenda 21". We therefore reiterate our proposal, first made at Rio de Janeiro, that a conference be convened in Latvia on the subject of "Disarmament for Environment". We ask the United Nations and all States for their support.

Latvia is grateful for the support received from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). A UNDP representative now resides in Riga and assists the Latvian Government in the preparation of projects on technical assistance.

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A matter of great imporance to Latvia, from the viewpoint both of respect for our sovereignty and of our capacity to pay, is the determination of the assessment rate for the contribution of Latvia to the regular budget, a rate that will in turn determine our total contribution to the United Nations system. Respect for our sovereignty requires that the assessment be determined on the basis of data accepted by Latvia itself, rather than on data provided by the State Statistical Committee of the former Soviet Union - in particular, because it is not and never has been the position of Latvia that it is a successor to the rights and obligations of the former Soviet Union.

Latvia unequivocally supports the statement adopted at the first summit meeting of the Security Council that the Secretary-General be invited to study methods of strengthening and making more effective the capacity of the United Nations for preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping. We support efforts that will decrease threats to the maintenance of international peace and security and to our own sovereignty. Regrettably, in the presence of the internal instability of large neighbouring States, the security of small States is not guaranteed. Latvia would support the granting of authority to the Secretary-General to use not only diplomacy against aggression but force as well. Of course, it will be necessary to create and approve a legal basis as well as a mechanism for the implementation of such authority.

We shall always be responsible to our nation for observing United Nations legal norms and principles. Were we to fail in meeting our responsibilities, we would not excuse ourselves by reference to our limited political experience, nor to our economic problems. It is our hope that no State will use its size or its economic and military power as an excuse for ignoring United Nations standards.

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Latvia values highly the report "An Agenda for Peace", the inspiration for, and author of, which was the Secretary-General. Latvia hopes that United Nations support for the rightful demand to withdraw foreign military forces will be evidence of the good will of world opinion and a good example of preventive diplomacy.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Anatolijs Gorbunovs, Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY MR. SIXTO DURAN BALLEN, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Ecuador.

Mr. Sixto Durán Ballén, President of the Republic of Ecuador, was escorted into the Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Ecuador, His Excellency Mr. Sixto Durán Ballén, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President DURAN BALLEN (interpretation from Spanish): I wish to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your well-deserved election to guide our endeavours during this session of the General Assembly.

Similarly, I extend to the Secretary-General my congratulations on his having assumed his important office at a time when the international community is going through substantial changes, and when it needs, in that high post, an experienced and brilliant diplomat such as he. He has succeeded Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, an illustrious Latin American who discharged the duties of the office with great effectiveness, as the new era required.

My presence here, so soon after assuming the Presidency of my country, must be taken as a clear sign of the enormous importance we attach to the United Nations, its principles and its work, which is increasingly far-reaching and truly valuable, work that is essentially that of keeping the peace and, also, of course, bringing about the economic and social development of all the peoples on Earth. The latter task is particularly important for Ecuador, which is striving to overcome underdevelopment and achieve decent living conditions for its people, particularly the great majorities. To that

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end, we have begun to restructure the State, and we have already prescribed some economic measures that will require sacrifice on the part of my compatriots, but that will soon have positive effects.

The current international situation, stemming from the end of the cold war, could be said to oscillate between disappointment and hope. There seems to exist something more than a truce between ideological rivalries, which we hope will lead us to a truer understanding among nations; and with the lessening influence of the private interests of individuals and nations, we hope it will give way to an international equilibrium which will allow us to forge ahead, together, towards universal, stable and lasting peace.

That circumstance explains the special importance of the fact that, in international life, respect for the human being has assumed top priority and man finds himself exalted, raised to heights never enjoyed until a few decades ago. But the continued enjoyment of such a position, despite the discontinuities still existing in certain corners of the world, requires the constant political commitment of States, which, fortunately, is widespread, to the unconditional implementation of the constitutional and conventional norms that reinforce that conquest at its various levels.

Speaking of human rights, my Government is firmly and irrevocably resolved to apply, both domestically and internationally, a policy of full respect for, and defence of, those very rights, in consonance with the dignity of man, as a tribute to his spirituality and in clear recognition of his transcendental values. Respect for human rights is not a gracious concession that Governments make to their peoples, but rather an unwritten, intrinsic obligation of democracy and civil life. The opposite is barbarism, the denial

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of some men by others; it is the action of the few who, using the power given to them by the community for the common good, distort it and turn it into the supreme evil of pitting man against man. My Government will use any and all means in the prevention against such ignominy.

Moreover, one can see that the world community has emphasized, out of a concept of solidarity, not only the promotion of human rights but also the rendering of humanitarian assistance to those most in need of it, and has found itself searching for ever more effective mechanisms to extend such assistance to all corners of the Earth, wherever violence or natural disasters continue to breed hunger and despair.

Despite the fact that we find ourselves in an ever more interdependent world where it is essential that cooperation not be linked to specific political interests, a world where integration is and must be the language which best expresses the hopes of peoples, we still face positions that prevent economic relations from being equitable to and supportive of developing countries within the effective exercise of the principle of international free trade, towards which my Government is working and will work according to a plan.

The success of this new course will depend greatly not only on immense domestic efforts but also on the necessary alignment of the theory of international solidarity with the real, sincere and favourable response of the international community, and on the understanding of the industrialized countries concerning the need to settle, on mutually agreeable terms, the problem of the external debt of the least developed countries, whose burden is another of the serious difficulties preventing those countries from developing

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and attaining better living standards. It would be most promising were an agreement reached on the mechanisms for alleviating this problem, which is at the same time economic and financial, and a problem whose repercussions in the social and political fields no one now denies. Among such mechanisms, those aimed at converting external debt into investment, especially in development projects, both social and economic, should be pressed forward.

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Fortunately the dark atomic threat is disappearing. The agreements and undertakings which, with a new vision of the very destiny of mankind, have the aim of eliminating nuclear arms, are a source of hope. At the same time, they can be the means by which, by eliminating the enormous waste of resources, we may help to solve economic and social problems and embark upon a process of frank cooperation with nations that are in the greatest need of help to raise their standards of living.

Notwithstanding these positive advances and these undertakings, we look to the future with concern, as the new situation resulting from the historic circumstances of the last two years has not managed to prevent the outburst of bloody regional conflicts. Nationalist extremists have produced the phenomenon of the exceptionally violent disintegration of States, and in such a climate new calamities and hardships have arisen.

A responsible approach to the common obligations of mankind is now more important than ever before. The world has shrunk physically and in terms of human relationships. The problems of a particular State affect other States in various ways and make it necessary that we take remedial action in a spirit of solidarity.

Meanwhile, the old problems of disparity between an economically powerful world, embracing a limited number of countries, and the developing world, comprising the bulk of mankind, continue to worsen. Insufficient funding for development has become endemic, making necessary decisions on a global basis. Moreover, the insufficiency of funding means that all States must carry a fair share of the load. Without help, poor States cannot free themselves from their condition of impoverishment, and they cannot partake in the enjoyment of

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a life of dignity, free from the fear of insecurity and poverty. For this reason, we firmly support the convening of an international conference on the financing of development, in order to allelviate in some way the situation of the great number of States that urgently need extensive economic assistance.

Felipe Herrera, the Chilean to whom Latin Amderica owes so much, used to speak of the "mystique of urgency" that we must regain. Today I pay tribute to his memory. The social problems are urgent, and we must press the international organizations to provide funds accordingly and, in this regard, to demonstrate flexibility in keeping with each country's stage of development.

We are convinced that international trade, conducted in a transparent, non-discriminatory manner and on equitable terms, will be an important force in the revitalization of the world economy and will therefore be important to the developing countries. It is paradoxical and serious that the countries that are the greatest advocates of the elimination of trade barriers maintain, and even create new types of, protectionism and discrimination that make it difficult for the products of developing countries to gain access to their markets. This applies at present, for example, to bananas. And all this is taking place in the interdependent world that I mentioned at the beginning of my statement.

In 1962 or 1963, as the representative of the Inter-American Development Bank, I spoke here about social questions. I believe that once again the United Nations must give these questions urgent attention. Economic development is important only insofar as it meets human needs. It is time all great social problems were better understood so that the United Nations might draw up an international programme of action to serve as the basis for the conference on social questions that it has been decided to convene.

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Preservation of the environment, which is linked inextricably to sustainable development, is of enormous importance because of its national and international impact. The Stockholm Declaration of 1972 represented the first international step towards the establishment of basic universal principles for the protection of the world's environment. Since 1972 significant efforts have been made to stop pollution of land, seas and air and to prevent desertification and deforestation and other types of ecological damage.

However, the constraints of reality made new initiatives necessary, and these culminated in the Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 - a landmark event whose basic aim was to achieve agreement on certain programmes aimed at arresting the steady deterioration of the environment. Let us hope that the outcome of that Conference will be generally beneficial and will help to guarantee the future development and well-being of mankind. My Government is ready to take action to improve the environment of its own country and to contribute to universal efforts to preserve nature.

But I must emphasize that although the developed countries, which are mainly responsible for the deterioration of the environment, have a particular obligation, it is other countries that are being asked to make the sacrifice of restricting the exercise of their legitimate right to use the wealth that nature has given them. It is necessary to seek due compensation jointly, especially in the shape of financal aid and technological cooperation.

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Ecuador, having become a transit country and an operational bridgehead for the drug trade, understands that drug trafficking, money laundering and related crimes are particularly harmful to young people, threaten democracy, produce an unnatural economy and, above all, damage the moral values of nations. We condemn drug trafficking in all its forms, and, while we do what we can to combat it, responsibility must be shared by the producer countries and the consumer contries. Thus we support the timely initiative of the President of Colombia, who, from this rostrum, suggested that a United Nations conference on illicit drugs be planned and convened with all the urgency that this matter demands.

Unresolved economic and social, as well as humanitarian and ecological, problems of overriding importance continue to be a source of instability, and they carry the seeds of damage to international relations and even of conflict.

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For those reasons, the Council requested the Secretary-General to prepare a special report, appropriately titled "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277).

As a fresh contribution to previous efforts within the United Nations, whether to strengthen international security, promote good-neighbourly relations between States or to further the use of procedures to ensure he peaceful settlement of disputes, and with the constant aim of maintaining peace, this new Agenda introduced by the Secretary-General has some creative aspects and offers innovate alternatives for States to consider - notably, the one he has so aptly termed "preventive diplomacy". As the well-known popular saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. My country, which is profoundly peace-loving by vocation and abides by the international principles of peaceful coexistence, supports this felicitous initiative by the Secretary-General, which will surely alert the nations to new opportunities for understanding and valid options for settling their disputes.

Peace is not a blessing bestowed on us through the simple desire to live together peaceably: the need to cooperate in good faith while respecting the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter is also important. Peace is the result of a universal awareness that it is only by making a genuine contribution to the common weal, to the law of States, and with growing activities in solidarity and with international justice and equity that peace can grow and establish itself. Only in this way will peace be an integral part of the harmonious development of our peoples and of their security.

A few weeks after my Government's inauguration, I came to this forum, the General Assembly, to make known not only my country's general ideas about the

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world situation but also the principles which it has traditionally applied and will continue to apply in its international policy and, at the same time, to reiterate Ecuador's determination to contribute, as resolutely and wholeheartedly as possible, to the establishment of a permanent and constructive peace among all people.

The people of Ecuador loves peace and believes in justice. My Government earnestly desires to maintain friendly relations with all countries and most of all with its neighbours; this is, of course, the natural result of Ecuador's deep-seated feelings, which, historically speaking, been expressed since the birth of the Republic, and are part of its character.

Ecuador, as representatives in this General Assembly will already be well aware, is sincerely determined to solve its territorial problem with Peru. The beginning of dialogue between the two countries' Heads of State was a major step forward in this quest: it overcame the political taboo that had prevented Ecuadorians and Peruvians from discussing this situation in cordial, frank and constructive terms, without ignoring legitimate national interests and studying the obvious opportunities for joint development.

It is my pleasure to inform this world forum that I am determined that the handling of the territorial problem with Peru - which, for so many years past has been a source of mistrust, concern and even discord between our two countries - will be directed towards transforming the mutual suspicions of the past on the basis of justice and realism, in cooperation and with our efforts dedicated to the development of our impoverished peoples.

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Our two countries, so alike on many counts, can and, above all, must find a just, honourable and realistic solution to the territorial dispute, which will mean a real process of economic intergration. That is why, on the very day my Government took office, I said, in the presence of President Alberto Fujimori, that Ecuador would steadfastly continue to speak clearly and frankly, in an atmosphere of harmony and mutual respect with the help of the four countries which have historically been most closely associated with Ecuador and Peru on this matter over the last 50 years, and with the eminent participation of His Holiness John Paul II, in order to reach a permanent solution to this territorial dispute as soon as possible. This will enable Ecuador and Peru to extend a hand of friendship from the Pacific to the Amazon, which was discoverd by an expedition that set out from Quito.

In fact, Argentina, Brazil, Chile and the United States of America have been cognizant of the territorial crisis besetting Ecuador and Peru and have been witnesses in good standing of the hard times of sacrifice and suffering for my country; they know the history of the formation of our Republics, the misfortunes of their independence and of the subsequent years. They know about the origins and the epics of our peoples, about our rights and the events that have gone to weave the pattern of our history. For all those reasons, in a most special way, these four sister countries are destined to contribute to the search for just and creative initiatives to encourage Ecuador and Peru to overcome this territorial problem once and for all - in short, to enable them, with vision and courage, to write their common history.

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What can I say about the invaluable aid and assistance that His Holiness the Pope has given many countries, guided always by his vocation for peace and understanding between governments and peoples, particularly those of deep Christian faith? With his enlightened thought, as set out in the encyclical "Centesimus Annus", he has exhorted us to take specific steps to establish or consolidate international structures designed to seek peaceful solutions, and has reminded us that arbitration is an appropriate method of resolving conflicts which would otherwise keep nations unnecessarily estranged.

That is why my predecessor, President Rodrigo Borja, quite rightly suggested, from this very rostrum, that His Holiness the Pope should offer his most valuable assistance, which would without a doubt be of great significance. In different terms and in another context, the President of Peru, during his official visit to Ecuador in January 1992, also stressed the singular importance of His Holiness's cooperation.

In my inaugural message to my Government on 10 August last, I acknowledged that our views on these matters might differ from those of the Government and President of Peru; but that is precisely why it is important for there to be a frank and sincere dialogue between our Governments and peoples - which dialogue would be the more significant for the fraternal aid of the four countries and the succour and assistance of the successor of Saint Peter.

In conclusion, my Government and country are more convinced than ever of the immense contribution being made by the United Nations in the various fields of vital importance for humankind. I am personally honoured to recall that my father was the first Ambassador of the Republic of Ecuador to this

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Organization when it was taking its first steps in San Francisco. The Government of my country trusts that the noble objectives of peace and mutual understanding between all nations near and far, which have come notably to the fore in recent times, will eventually bring us good results which will make it possible for the world to enter the twenty-first century renewed and with its international relations restructured under the seal of law, justice and sustainable development for all peoples.

I am quite sure that this General Assembly, by resolutely serving these interests, will bring us noticeably closer to the goal we all wish so much to reach. Let us embark upon this new path.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Ecuador for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Sixto Durán Ballén, President of the Republic of Ecuador, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY MR. EDUARD A. SHEVARDNADZE, CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Chairman of the Council of State of the Republic of Georgia.

Mr. Eduard A. Shevardnadze, Chairman of the Council of State of the Republic of Georgia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Chairman of the Council of State of the Republic of Georgia, His Excellency Mr. Eduard A. Shevardnadze, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Chairman SHEVARDNADZE (interpretation from Russian): One does not usually say anything personal from this podium. I would submit, however, that my position does allow me to depart from this role. Exactly two years ago, I finished my address here and left this very podium for what I thought was the last time. Yes, I foresaw my resignation from the post of Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, as I also foresaw menacing changes coming.

Before coming here again I reread that address. The ideas that inspired it are, I think, still valid today. They helped me make a forecast that has been borne out by current events. I said then that all the peoples of the Soviet Union were entering the political arena and reassuming their age-old national names.

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All of them, including my country, are being dogged by the merciless onslaught of the economic crisis, which I also spoke about in my appeal to the international community to set up an international mechanism capable of mitigating its adverse effects.

I said then that after the end of the cold war new and sinister figures would appear on the world political scene, and that the breakdown of attempts to take the road to democracy would give rise to chaos and new dictatorial regimes. I followed my prediction about the threat of new armed conflicts emerging, of mass hostage-taking and the spread of terrorism with the conclusion that regional structures - security structures - operating under United Nations auspices must be set up.

Even that long ago, two years, I keenly felt the need to really think in terms of doctrine about the new realities of the contemporary world, to re-examine the old principles of our interrelationships, in both the inter- and intra-State areas, and to work out new ones.

When I spoke then I was speaking as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of a great Power. Now I am speaking as the representative of a country that is microscopic in comparison. However, the dramatic change in scale does not reduce the size of the problems. In that tiny part of Earth called Georgia, which history has nailed to the geopolitical cross, have converged, in a manner that passes understanding, all the woes and contradictions that the Empire fed into its genetic code and constantly generated, and which continue to rack us even now that the Empire is dead. Everything I thought and spoke of, foresaw and predicted has befallen Georgia, my country. And there was no need for clairvoyance, either; all you needed was to know the system you were

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dealing with. One of the greats once said that predicting important events in the future was no more difficult than successfully guessing the past: if past events leave traces, then, logically, future events must have roots.

The system was doomed. In August 1991, there was an attempt to save it using its own typical methods: conspiracy, flouted laws, the use of force. I had on many occasions warned about the possibility of a coup and totalitarian revanchism. If the necessary conclusions had been drawn from these words of warning, then we would have been dealing not with the chaotic collapse of a huge Power, but with relatively painless and controllable transitions to a new status quo and to the formation of new States. The swiftness of the death throes and the speed of the disintegration took the world community by surprise. It was caught off guard, and is now seeing how new offshoots of violence, new offshoots of catastrophe, are sprouting from the exposed rootstock.

Georgia will serve as a typical example. Here we have deep socio-economic crisis. Here the fall of the Empire was attended by the rise of a dictatorial regime. Here several internal conflicts were provoked, and separatism threatens to break up a small country and splinter its historic territory into dwarf States. Here subversion, terrorism and mass hostage-taking rule. And, finally, here as nowhere else is the danger so great that the existing internal conflicts will merge with the ones in neighbouring States and grow into regional or even continental wars fought along national or religious lines.

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I would recall that, like some other countries, Georgia was incorporated into the Soviet Union by military force. That force was inspired by an ideology that placed the interests of the class struggle far above common human goals and national values. In the light of this ideology, the integrity of territories and borders that had been shaped over time was of no significance: they were redrawn and parcelled out again to follow the lines on the battlefield of proletarian internationalism. The State, political, administrative and territorial structure so formed was such that it contained within itself the germs of dissatisfaction, smouldering enmity and potential conflict within republics and between them.

Time bombs were planted for our futures. While the power of ideology and repressive compulsion kept this heterogeneous community together, the bombs lay idle. As soon as that power was removed, they went off, and today a blast front of enormous power is destroying whole States.

Georgia too is threatened. The history of Georgia's struggle for statehood spans many centuries. For many centuries, this struggle went together with the formation of a distinctive national culture and the defence of its faith and language. In the year 337 AD, Christianity, as the State religion, blessed the country's impulse towards unity within its own common borders. Having become a powerful State in Western Asia by the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Georgia established cultural centres both within its own borders and in various other States beyond.

My portrait of Georgia would not be complete if I missed out one very important feature: from time immemorial, as part of the flow of peoples, ideas and cultures, Georgia has upheld racial and religious tolerance as a

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basic tenet of its way of life. Forced to do battle with the most powerful foreign adversaries, Georgia did not suffer from either xenophobia or religious fanaticism. In its capital city, Tbilisi, within an area of one square kilometre, one can see a Georgian Orthodox church, an Armenian Gregorian cathedral, a mosque, a synagogue and a Lutheran church. Christian from the fourth century on, Georgia has also seen Islam take root in some of its historically important provinces. And never was there enmity or discord between them, nor was anyone denied the right to live according to his or her own beliefs or traditions.

Unfortunately for all of us, the slings and arrows of history brought down this unity, from within as well as from outside, and something similar is happening now. I consider it my duty to draw your attention to the Caucasus region, as, here and now, a new and serious hotbed of interethnic, regional and international tension is emerging.

This new source of shockwaves is within the mainstream of contemporary geopolitical trends: the displacement of a global confrontation onto regional levels. This displacement has taken the form of large-scale armed conflicts, such as the ones we are seeing in some countries of Europe, around the Dniestr, at home in Georgia and in Transcaucasia, and in Central Asia.

This vacuum of ideas abhors its own emptiness. We should have started thinking about events in the huge expanse from Bosnia to Tajikistan, including the Caucasus, and studying them, long ago, to find out the whys and wherefores. Sound politicians and statesmen as well as ordinary people, whether Christian or Muslim, who live in this vast area or elsewhere have a duty to halt this most dangerous process. The threat of large-scale conflicts kindled and enflamed by fundamentalism - of whatever kind - is too

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serious to be ignored. And the danger is that much greater when fanaticism is exploited by fundamentalists of a Bolshevist stripe.

Although they have various causes, the new conflicts do have some features in common, particularly the following: they all began and are developing against a background in which a number of factors are operating either simultaneously or partially. These are an ethnic patchwork; a variety of religions and denominations; socio-economic inequality; and a troubled historical and political past.

In the case of the Caucasus, these factors - which are common to all the regions in question - must be added to the specificity of its geopolitical situation. At the meeting point of powerful geopolitical forces, it has from time immemorial served as a buffer zone between South and North, Christianity and Islam, as an arena in which they played out their aspirations and interests.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union has left an opening for new rivalries to appear. Because of their political, economic and military weakness, the new States of the Caucasus are not able to fill this vacuum and establish reliable safeguards for their own security. External forces apart, various internal groupings are trying to turn the vacuum to their own advantage under the cover of nationalistic, pseudopatriotic, separatist, and, most recently, even religious guises with their own, self-serving politcal agendas.

The activities of the so-called Confederation of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus, which has flouted the sovereignty, the territorial integrity and the borders of the Republic of Georgia, have made this clear in one way or another. Against the will of the people of the northern Caucasus and their legally elected governments, this illegal, in essence openly terrorist,

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militarized organization, serving no State, has called for any means to be used, including mass terror; has declared our country, and its capital city, a disaster zone; and has been sending mercenaries and terrorist killers, in the guise of volunteers, across our frontiers. Under our very eyes, the flames of war are rising, and are even now threatening to engulf not only Georgia alone.

Right before our eyes a new war is blazing up, threatening not just Georgia. There is only one conclusion to be drawn: in comparison with the other "hot spots" of the post-communist world, the risk of conflict in the Caucasus is higher, and the Caucasus therefore endangers international peace and security more.

Georgia is at the very centre of where the problems of the Caucasus meet. Yet again, as so often before in our history, Georgia's fate, its statehood and its very existence are marked on the map. Faced with the complex interactions of internal and external forces, we are striving to implement an active, balanced policy. Within the country, our policy is one of democratic transformation, national reconciliation and peaceful settlement of conflicts, while externally it is one of the development of friendly relationships with all the countries in the region and cooperation with the world community.

We are grateful to our neighbours through history: to Turkey, with which we have concluded a friendhip treaty; and to Iran, with which we are developing friendly contacts, to the mutual benefit of both countries. Our centuries-long links with the peoples of Transcaucasia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, and with the republics of the Northern Caucasus and with Ukraine, give us an excellent foundation for close cooperation in the interest of our countries.

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Of particular importance to us - and not to us alone - are our relations with Russia. Russia has assisted us in setting up machinery to settle the Georgian-Ossetian conflict. Twice now Russia has borne witness to the principle of the territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders of our State, and has joined in the process of achieving a peaceful settlement in another conflict, in Abkhazia.

A stable, prosperous and democratic Russia is a factor on a global scale and global in significance. A threat to Russia from the forces of totalitarian revanchism is a threat to us all. In the conspiracy against Georgia which is now coming out into the open, Russia's red-brown reactionaries are standing shoulder to shoulder with the extreme fundamentalists, home-grown fascists and separatists. The world must know about this, and the world has a duty to help reinforce a stable, democratic Russia and, by so doing, help both us and its own self.

Those are the facts of our political life today. Those facts are why we keep trying to achieve the establishment of a Transcaucasian mechanism for consultation and agreement. We propose that we should begin to establish a system of collective security in the Black Sea-Caucasus region, and, in this regard, we very much appreciate Turkey's initiatives. We support the new institutions of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), whose goal is conflict prevention and the protection of the rights of national minorities. Our doors are wide open to fact-finding missions from European or world organizations.

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However, today this is not enough. The end of the cold war has put the need to develop a more effective system of global security on the agenda. The pace of events is outstripping us; the European process is falling behind, and has been very late with its response to the challenges of a time of transformations. There has been a significant lag too in the United Nations reaction to the major changes in various regions of the world, with the changes in the former Soviet Union in the forefront.

We welcome the bold initiatives of the Secretary-General aimed at making the Organization more dynamic and capable of responding quickly to the needs of the day. His report "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277) quite rightly raises the question of the United Nations taking a multi-tiered approach to the problems of the modern world. It is a good thing that an authoritative, independent commission has been set up to examine the role of the Organization under current conditions.

There is no need to fear reforms when reforms are so necessary, especially, in our view, in the two interrelated fields of peace-keeping and nation-building in the newly independent States. I have a number of suggestions to make about these two fields.

My first suggestion concerns the establishment of a global monitoring network for the monitoring, prevention and settlement of internal conflicts. Special United Nations observers at "hot spots" and regional bureaux, missions and information centres would help us obtain a clear picture of events and develop specific responses. The machinery for doing this should be based right in the regions where conflict is occurring; in our example, in the Caucasus it could be based on the United Nations office in Tbilisi. We would also suggest expanding the mandate of the CSCE High Commissioner for national

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minorities so that, if required, he could inform the Secretary-General and our Organization's Commission on Human Rights. The most important thing is that this should be got off the ground as quickly as possible. Similar institutions with the same mandates could be established within other regional organizations too.

The United Nations needs a special body to collect and process information on potential ethnic conflicts and to draw conclusions and issue recommendations based upon it. Another of its functions would be to forecast conflict situations at an early stage in their gestation.

The International Court too could be brought in to consider conflicts.

The role and the capabilities of the Security Council must be looked at anew. We have more than once raised the issue of whether the Military Staff Committee should not become more actively involved. Now that the cold war is over but the number of "hot spots" is burgeoning, the Security Council cannot do without this, or another similar structure, if it is to carry out its function under the Charter in full measure.

It must be made binding on the States Members of the United Nations to inform the Security Council of imminent conflicts. Failure to comply must call down sanctions. We commit ourselves to sending the United Nations and its Security Council annual reports on the state of affairs in the areas of the protection of human rights and national minorities, and on crisis situations which could lead to serious complications within the country or the region.

This problem has yet another facet: information. Rivalry spills over into the newspapers and on the airwaves, and the side with the best technology, the most money and the widest access to the media and to media

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people wins. Public opinion becomes one-sided and unfounded, but this again is half the battle. The worst thing is that this guerilla warfare in the media nourishes the soil of conflicts and makes them more difficult to settle. We see a possible way out of this by establishing centres to disseminate objective information under the auspices of the international organizations.

My second suggestion concerns the problem of refugees. Ethnic conflicts have increased their number manyfold: no one now knows exactly how many there are. No one knows what resources are needed to help them and what we should start doing first to rule out the possibility of fresh conflicts after they return home. Here too a system of observers is needed, as is an aid organization larger in scale than what we have now and capable not only of providing material support but of making the whole process more manageable. In our view, the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees needs root-and-branch reform.

My third suggestion is that there should be general and comprehensive control over the proliferation of arms. The clans of ethnic mafiosi spawned under the totalitarian system are accumulating the colossal sums needed to acquire weapons and to suborn soldiers into taking part in hostilities and passing out matériel to the irregulars on the quiet. The national security forces and law-enforcement agencies in the young independent States are being overwhelmed by this epidemic of out-of-control arms races. What we need are international rapid deployment forces - a sort of Interpol of Blue Helmets - an independent disarmament monitoring agency and the introduction of regional arms registers.

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My fourth suggestion is for United Nations rapid deployment forces in the field of international legal thought and theoretical and doctrinal developments. The traditional system of legal guidelines is lagging hopelessly far behind the onrush of geopolitical changes. The world is facing arbitrary and one-sided interpretations of a whole range of internationally recognized principles. Arbitrary, wild-cat declarations of sovereignty have led in practice to encroachments on the territorial integrity of States and on the inviolability of their borders, and to large population groups being turned into second-class citizens; it has also caused and will cause many bloody conflicts.

Unfortunately, separatism and extremism, when combined, are the ruin not just of States but of legal systems too. The top dogs of the separatist movements are bending the rules so far they are turning them into caricatures. If extremist separatism is not stopped, what awaits is a world splintered and in collapse, with the anarchy and chaos lasting into the twenty-first century.

On no account can some principles be made absolute at the expense of others. It is morally wrong for one group to go for self-determination as if they do not notice that for centuries, side-by-side with them, on the same land, there have been peoples living, peoples that cannot physically be removed. This is the problem to beat all problems of today's world.

Every aspiration, every claim, every norm and category should be measured in terms of the human scale of politics, whose priorities are the equality of the rights of each citizen, of everybody, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, language or religion. In the light of this approach, we see that

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not only do national minorities need to have their rights protected, but so do the citizens of the majority, however paradoxical that may sound. Otherwise, we may face an updated form of apartheid and ethnic dictatorship, like we have in the conflict zone of Abkhazia, where the minority has managed to impose its will on the majority.

How could this have come about? What we have here is a classic example of self-interested bending of the law. Thanks to a discriminatory electoral law, electors of a single nationality, comprising no more than 18 per cent of the population, send more deputies to the parliament of the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic than the electors in another that makes up more than half the population there, and the rights of the other national groups are being trampled on too: it takes only a third as many votes to elect one Abkhazi deputy as it does to elect a Georgian, a Russian, an Armenian and so on.

At the end of the day, this kind of legal extremism leads to bitter confrontation. The governing élite, reflecting as it does the mood of the extremist wing of the minority, is ruling by Draconian diktat and is going so far as to wrest territory that has been Georgia's from time immemorial away from it.

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Separatism is immune to dialogue and compromise: this we know from our own experience. Separatism does not want talks, rejects the methods of rational politics and even balks at implementing what it has agreed. It switches meanings, calling agression and occupation "movement of military sub-units within our own territory". How can this be? And in Georgia, on Georgian soil, where Georgians and Abkhazis have lived, still live and will go on living together?

In the near future the General Assembly will consider a draft declaration on the rights of national minorities. We are going to support it, as we supported the corresponding resolutions of the CSCE. However, I wish to say once again that any instrument of this kind must also contain an article on minorities' share of the responsibility for maintaining stability and peace in the territory where they live.

It is also time to develop more precise criteria for which legal subjects are entitled to self-determination, and to introduce a practice of independent, expert examination of the facts involved in the arbitrary interpretation and exercise of this right.

My fifth suggestion concerns the fact that none of the above will work properly unless more effective machinery for supporting the new democracies economically is set up. My saying so does not detract from our gratitude to the European and world financial institutions; it is thanks to them that we are still alive. However, facts are facts: the economies of the republics of the former Union are on the brink of catastrophe. The drop in production by almost a third, in Georgia's case, the lack of fuel and raw materials and the catastrophic increases in prices for them, the loss of traditional suppliers and markets and imminent mass unemployment set a limit to democratic transformations.

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I say to you most emphatically: the appalling economic crisis in the republics of the former Union will send shock waves throughout the world. If this goes on, a social explosion of enormous force is inevitable. A change in values away from democracy to those of the power of the firm hand is inevitable. And for this the world will have a higher price to pay than it would have to pay now. Let us think how we can prevent this, let us think what sort of system of reliable international economic insurance we can try to set up.

It is quite clear that this point must be taken into account in the international organizations, particularly the United Nations: it is difficult to talk about world economic stability and a single world zone of security if the world's leading Powers do not take part. The Security Council absolutely must exert real influence on the state of affairs. I used to come out against increasing the number of permanent members. Now that the Soviet Union has fallen apart and the balance of power has shifted, we need to concern ourselves with finding the best composition of permanent members to increase the degree of effect that the Security Council can have on the world economic process, and not just on the economic process. The role of economic giants such as Germany and Japan will have to be rethought.

I would mention in passing that the forecasts concerning certain pretensions on the part of the United States of America to some kind of special role in the new circumstances that would allow it to impose its will on the world have not proved to be accurate - what I have in mind here is the principal, fundamental trend. The balanced foreign policy of this great country has not run counter to the interests of other States and, in the final analysis, has helped maintain the balance in the interests of peace and

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stability. We would like to hope that the United States will go on being a guarantee of peace, order and equilibrium in the new, extremely complex conditions and in the process of building the new world order.

The United Nations cannot stand idly by when it comes to material support for the new democracies. Here too we need rapid deployment forces, economic ones this time. The United Nations is quite within its powers to coordinate the activities of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and other regional and international institutions more effectively and on a new basis in order to give fuller support for the success of the economic reforms in the new States that have begun that most important process, the building of democratic societies.

My sixth suggestion is that we are quite simply obliged to introduce into the body of international law an instrument concerning the personal responsibility of individuals who incite mass disorders, political brutality, hostage-taking, terrorist acts or any kind of blockade, whether economic or political. Our troubled times have brought these people forth. The pygmies are in revolt against humankind. This has all happened before, but the world has never before had to face a wave of "Messiahs" wanting to consolidate their power on the back of the sufferings of their own people on the scale it is facing them now. Lilliputians tying down Gullivers - that is the reality in many countries, including my own.

I now come to my seventh and last suggestion. Everything I have said so far attests to the fact that our common responsibility for peace and security requires us to harmonize and coordinate our common efforts in the political, economic, military, financial and ecological fields. These fields should be managed on four interdependent and interrelated levels: the intra-State,

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the regional, the supraregional and the worldwide. The first level will not become established unless our Organization manages to find ways to support the making of the new democratic States. The second will be possible if there is agreement on an identity or a proximity of interests on the part of the States involved in regional cooperation. Organizations such as the CSCE, the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of American States and an alliance of the countries of the Black Sea basin could form the basis for the third level. The fourth level involves establishing a coordinating system for interactions on a world scale, in which the principal coordinator would be the United Nations and its institutions.

This rostrum has always seemed very high to me. I used to feel how high it was even when the the world was ready to hang on the every word of the representative of a huge and mighty Power, whatever that word might be. That is the privilege of the powerful, but I did use to try to make our words sound like a message of good will rather than of malign force. Now that I am speaking on behalf of a small and weak country, I feel how much higher this rostrum has grown and what a lifeline it is for my homeland.

There was a considerable element of risk involved in my present ascent of this rostrum: things are very bad indeed back home. The bombshells of hatred are exploding all too often there. Those shells are aimed to destroy our policy of democratically establishing and constructing an honest, just State open to the world. Such explosions are all the more likely today, in the run-up to parliamentary elections in which the people of the Republic of Georgia must either endorse or reject our policy of democracy and freedom.

Nevertheless, I have come so that Georgia does not lose what is now its only chance to tell the world about its hopes and aspirations, to confirm the

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truth and refute the lie. I have come so that I can once again reaffirm my commitment to the word we gave the world community. What of it that the scale has diminished and the horizons have closed in? I am thinking, speaking and acting in accordance with the same principles and norms I have stood up for here for all these years past.

Finally - and this will be my last personal confession - I have missed your company very, very much.

I have gone over the time-limit, but the way things are is that the smaller the size and scale of a State, the more time it needs.

I thank you for hearing me out.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Chairman of the Council of State of the Republic of Georgia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Eduard A. Shevardnadze, Chairman of the Council of State of the Republic of Georgia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. MORAVCIK (Czechoslovakia): Let me congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its forth-seventh session. I wish you much success and promise you full support.

I thank your predecessor, Mr. Shihabi, for guiding the General Assembly to success at its forth-sixth session.

The past year weakened further the illusion that the end of the cold war would facilitate a speedy and effective solution of problems that built up during the post-war period. It has been a sobering year, during which we have been involved in the gradual process of getting acquainted with the possible. Sometimes we see euphoria replaced by total pessimism and little faith.

While the era of bipolarity is over and democracy is winning, many conflicts remain unresolved, and a new generation of conflicts is beginning. In addition to conflicts with which we have dealt routinely, but unsuccessfully, over the years, we are now witnesssing a great variety of wars. The number of zones of conflict gets larger and larger. Nagorno-Karabakh, Transnistria, South Ossetia, Abkhasia and Bosnia and Herzegovina - mainly Bosnia and Herzegovina - are new symbols of violence to which we have no answers.

The United Nations, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the European Communities, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Western European Union (WEU) and the Council of Europe are unable, despite all their commendable efforts, to exert sufficient pressure to secure the desired solutions to these tragedies. In this respect, there has been

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growing impatience and anxiety, as well as dissatisfaction and criticism, on the part of the public and the mass media. It has become routine to question the role of international institutions as instruments that are suitable for conflict management. Let us be frank about this: we face a problem of credibility. Much will be at stake if we fail to deal immediately with it.*

There is a risk that a very typical challenge of the 1990s - the relationship between statehood and nationhood - will become a phenomenon of world politics that defies efficient international regulation. In this respect in particular, international institutions have a fundamental role to play in providing a guarantee that the processes will develop on a basis of democracy and of respect for universal and civilized human values.

However, it would be a mistake to start the search for solutions by challenging international institutions as such. It would be a mistake to decide to modify the United Nations radically and rebuild it by rejecting the wisdom of its founding fathers, as embodied in the Charter. The claim that revitalization of the United Nations requires not a change in the Charter but, on the contrary, full implementation of the Charter is often considered to be a cliché. I regard it not as a cliché but as a wise approach, indicating not rigidity but, rather, a willingness to exploit fully the political potential of the Charter.

It is true that the Charter makes no explicit reference to drugs, organized crime, the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), indebtedness or the widening gap between the haves and the have-nots. However, it contains

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* Mr. Cetin (Turkey), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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fundamental political principles on the basis of which these problems can and should be solved. To that end, the things that are lacking are sometimes instruments, sometimes money and very often the political will. What is needed is - in short - a change in our approach to the priorities of the activities of the Organization.

It is in this climate that the Secretary-General's report - the "Agenda for Peace" - has come into our hands. The recommendations contained in that report provide useful guidelines for effective exploitation of the Charter's potential. I believe that the section dealing with the prevention of conflict requires elaboration, as it has been demonstrated that activity in this field will increasingly become one of the basic orientations of multilateral diplomacy.

In summary, the Secretary-General's report deals with confidence-building measures, fact-finding, early warning and preventive diplomacy. I am familiar with these terms as the CSCE, at its third summit, held in Helsinki, firmly incorporated them into the list of its instruments.

Mention of the CSCE brings me to a question that Czechoslovakia has proposed as a new item for the General Assembly's agenda - coordination of the activities of the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. In this connection, let me take the former Yugoslavia as an example. Several times, in my capacity as Chairman of the CSCE Council of Ministers, I have come across situations in which activities of the United Nations and activities of the CSCE overlap. Naturally, such overlapping has reduced the effectiveness of those activities.

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My meetings with Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the United Nations Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in the former Yugoslavia, clearly demonstrated a need for, and an interest in, regular coordination of United missions with those of the CSCE. In this connection, I should say that the United Nations made an excellent choice when it picked Mr. Mazowiecki for its human-rights activities in this explosive area.

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However, this problem does not concern just the former Yugoslavia. Like the CSCE, the United Nations has sent missions to Nagorno-Karabakh and Transnistria. As the aims of all these missions have been coordinated only in outline, it is no wonder that the parties to the conflict often fail to understand the purpose of these foreign delegations coming to see them and asking the same questions. It is often unclear how they differ.

The CSCE summit that took place in Helsinki in July laid the basis for improved cooperation between the United Nations and the CSCE, as well as other other organizations - NATO, the Western European Union (WEU) and the Council of Europe. The need for such interaction resulted in the London Conference on the former Yugoslavia. This was the first example of systematic cooperation between three international organizations, and it amounted to the first interlocking acion by the European Community, the United Nations and the CSCE. As the London Conference was attended also by the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the International Red Cross as a non-governmental organization, I see it as the germ of a loose system of cooperation between various institutions.

It seems to me that the time is right to consider seriously the convening of an informal "brainstorming" meeting of the United Nations, the CSCE, the European Community, NATO, the WEU and the Council of Europe to discuss the idea of an interlocking system of international organizations. The purpose of the proposed General Assembly agenda item on coordination between the United Nations and the CSCE is not simply to secure a resolution. In my opinion, that discussion of the issue at this session could develop at two levels - the conceptual level, at which the fundamental political meaning of coordination, both in the immediate future and in the light of medium-term and long-term

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prospects, could be clarified; and the practical level, at which the activities of the two institutions have already begun to overlap, making it possible to draw conclusions.

It will certainly be in the interests of the United Nations and of the CSCE to have the meaning of "preventive diplomacy" and "early warning" clarified. These terms have already taken on a very definite meaning at the CSCE, and the majority of United Nations Member States, as they do not participate in the CSCE, will probably want to become acquainted with them.

The conceptual discussion might focus also on the relationship between the United Nations and the CSCE as institutions each of which has the task of looking after the security of its members. This is especially so as the CSCE now covers an area stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

For the purpose of getting the discussion under way, I should like, in my national capacity, to put forward some ideas. Whenever the Security Council wishes to discuss a security issue within the competence of the CSCE, a representative of the CSCE should be invited to provide the Council with the necessary information on any CSCE activities in respect of that issue or otherwise to contribute to the work of the Council. The Council and its President, as well as the United Nations Secretary-General, should be kept constantly informed of the main activities of the CSCE, and the reverse should apply.

Coordination of the human-rights activities of the United Nations and of the CSCE could be improved by, for example, regular CSCE participation at meetings of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and its committees, the Economic and Social Council and the Third Committee of the General

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Assembly. And is there any reason why we should not establish working contacts between the United Nations Centre for Human Rights in Geneva and the CSCE's Warsaw Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights?

In addition, one of the main elements of the CSCE's early-warning system - the High Commissioner on National Minorities - might have some link with the United Nations. Indeed, at the appropriate time, that might even be turned into an institutional link. In the long term, the CSCE human-rights institutions, structures and mechanisms could become tools of both the United Nations and the Council of Europe.

Such discussion as I have suggested could dispel the fear of United Nations Member States which do not participate in the CSCE that the Helsinki process is an élite club that institutionalizes the gap between the rich North and the poor South.

We must also ensure that there is a proper understanding of the peace-keeping role of the CSCE vis-à-vis that of the United Nations. The most recent reason for this comparison is to be found in President Bush's statement to the General Assembly on Monday, in which he suggested that the peace-keeping function of the United Nations should be expanded considerably. The peace-keeping concept of the United Nations is not identical to that of the CSCE, and I believe that there is a good prospect of their becoming complementary. It should be remembered that, in this respect, the North Atlantic Alliance and the Western European Union have made important offers.

It is unlikely that we shall be able to avoid having a debate on peacemaking and peace-keeping. The crisis in the former Yugoslavia necessitates a really serious discussion of this question. It is unnecessary for me to reiterate my country's full support for the United Nations

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peace-keeping operations, as there are Czech and Slovak "blue helmets" in the former Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia has contributed to the United Nations operations in Angola, Somalia and Iraq. To be of practical benefit, discussion of the interaction between the United Nations and the CSCE should take place annually.

In today's world the United Nations can play an even more important role in arms control and disarmament. I am thinking especially of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction. When the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms becomes operational, it will have a substantial role to play.

The Secretary-General's report, "An Agenda for Peace", says, "globalism and nationalism need not be viewed as opposing trends" (para. 19). These words attracted my attention as they reflect one of the peculiarities of our times. They embody the historical experience of the two nations of Czechoslovakia - experience that I should like to share with members.

The idea of the right of nations to self-determination advanced by President Wilson facilitated the disintegration of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy, thus opening up the way for the creation of Czechoslavakia. That was 74 years ago.

(Mr. Moravcik, Czechoslovakia)

Czechoslovakia emerged, however, under the influence of the notion that there was a Czechoslovak nation, whereas it should have been admitted that there were two distinct nations - the Czechs and the Slovaks. But the idea of Czechoslovakism, which resulted in the creation of a common State for the world's two closest Slavic nations, impeded relations between those nations. Thus a specific Czecho-Slovak problem was born, and it remains unresolved.

At about the same time, communism tied nations together by means of the false idea of proletarian internationalism. This was bound to affect relations between the Czechs and the Slovaks. However, our experience indicates that communism was not the root of these problems; it simply gave them a new dimension. Many nations are now searching for a new role in Europe and in the world by seeking integration into larger economic entities and political groups.

I believe that, so far as Czechoslovakia is concerned, one possible solution lies in the replacement of the existing federalist pattern by new ties. Understanding and viable coexistence between nations cannot be based on false and outdated ideas. Czechoslovakia is therefore preparing to establish two closely connected sovereign States by creating a common economy space and retaining intact the close contacts between the peoples of the two republics. We want to introduce elements of European integration into the relations between the republics.

What is now taking place in Czechoslovakia is a process aimed at the creation of a solid basis for a model of integration such as has been developing democratically in Western Europe and has led to the creation and development of the European Communities.

(Mr. Moravcik, Czechoslovakia)

Globalism and nationalism are not necessarily opposing trends, provided that the right to self-determination is accompanied by the desire for closer cooperation with other nations and by efficient participation in international systems of guaranteeing the basic values upon which the world and especially the fragile structure of peace are built. We live in an era of global integration comprising different subsystems, among which the United Nations has an irreplaceable role to play.

I should like, in conclusion, to say that this statement is a sort of farewell speech of the Czechoslovak federation to the United Nations. It is highly probable that by January of next year the federation will have ceased to exist. Thus one of the founding members of the United Nations will give its place in international politics to the two new independent States. It is my hope that all the current Members of the United Nations will extend to the Czech republic and the Slovak republic the understanding that they have always shown to Czechoslovakia, by admitting them to membership as soon as possible.

Mr. MOUSSA (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): At the outset, I wish to convey the Egyptian Government's congratulations to the Presidency of Bulgaria on the election to the presidency of the General Assembly of Mr. Ganev and his assumption of that high post.

I should like also to put on record our appreciaiton of the capable manner in which Mr. Samir Shihabi, the permanent representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, conducted the work of the Assembly at its last session.

In addition, I want to congratulate the States that have recently joined the United Nations. I hope that they will participate effectively and constructively in the activities of the Organization and in defence of the purposes and principles of its Charter.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

This session, like past sessions and those that will follow in the 1990s, is of great importance. It is being held at a stage of evolution and change characterized by unprecedented dynamism and speed. It is a transitional stage in the course of which new patterns of international relations are being moulded. Hence, what the current session of the General Assembly is witnessing is not a stable international situation but, rather, a phase in a continuing process of evolution and change. Consequently, it is difficult to predict with any certainty what the years and decades to come may hold for the future of the world and its order.

This uninterrupted process of change, however, requires the reaffirmation of certain matters which, in our view, constitute the basics which should determine the image of the future.

The process of change should have a human content. No progress or civilization could have a point of departure other than respect for man, his rights, freedoms and dignity without discrimination because of colour, creed or religion. Only in a context of respect for peoples' rights, cultures and achievements and for their right to have their just demands met can there be any change or progress.

International cooperation and interdependence based on justice and fairness constitute the basis for salubrious change and for positive movement towards any breakthrough of the future.

In the context of the existing challenges, international peace and security are the collective responsibility of North and South, which should shoulder their burdens and obligations and, thereafter, share the dividends of success. Undoubtedly, the ever-increasing role of the Security Council necessitates a review of its membership and the scope of its responsibility, so that it may be a genuine reflection of international and regional forces.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

In their new concept, international relations should be integral in substance, rational in content and democratic in context. Therefore, the formulation of those relations requires collective participation if they are to reflect the interests of the international community, with all its components, and of the balance between rights and duties and between power and responsibility.

International relations, in their current state of evolution, reflect a greater awareness and wider recognition of the relationship between future and destiny. Similarly, they reflect constant movement towards realism in dealing with inherited and nascent dilemmas. Nevertheless, they have been unable to remove elements of suspicion and feelings of frustration. Rather, they have helped to exacerbate such feelings in many places and about many issues, especially in the third world.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

While the seeds of change indicate a relaxation of global military confrontations, at the same time, they have crystallized the inherited sediments of regional and ethnic tensions and have transformed the equation of rivalry between East and West into an equation between North and South that has not taken final shape yet as it has not dealt, and does not seem to be going to deal, rationally, with the massive historic imbalances between regions of affluence and regions of scarcity, between regions of progress and those of backwardness. Indeed, there is genuine concern that unless it takes place under agreed controls, the ongoing process of change, will lead to the codification of these imbalances and, thereby, make them a feature of the new world order, with all that that would entail in terms of turmoil and chaos.

These features of today's world, and portents of tomorrow's world, give rise to very real fears regarding the dominance of injustice and inequality in international relations on the political, security, economic and social levels.

After this foreword, which reflects the feelings of the third world, Egypt's delegation would like to discuss four issues: the state of affairs in the United Nations; the situation in the third world; disarmament; and peace efforts in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Europe.

It is highly important that the purposes of the Charter be made the foundation of the new era, so that justice may be ensured, social progress promoted and better standards of living achieved in greater freedom as expressed by the Secretary-General in his Agenda for Peace. In our view, this is the real core of positive development and of any world order that strives for stability and peace.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

The purposes of the Charter, however, cannot be realized, and the strong desire to ensure justice and to promote social and economic progress cannot be fulfilled, in an age in which acute racialist trends rear their heads anew, in which dangers threaten the lives of whole communities, and in which there are signs of a return to foreign intervention in the affairs of States and of peoples.

Hence, foremost among the main goals highlighted by the Secretary-General in his plan is action to deal, in a wider context, with the deepest causes of tension - economic deprivation and social injustice. Dealing with these banes should be the cornerstone of the new world era. In this connection, I should like to voice our strong support for a statement made by the Secretary-General - a statement that seems to have commanded insufficient consideration and appreciation. The Secretary-General said:

> "It is noticeable that there is a common moral concept which is increasingly emerging and spreading among the world's peoples and nations. It is reflected in international laws, most of which have emerged through efforts made by the United Nations."

This statement deals with an issue on which, in our view, we should reflect, for we are in real need of a common moral concept. For many decades, the world has been plagued by policies of racial discrimination. Now is the time, the opportunity, to rid ourselves of those policies. Unfortunately, however, other racial conflicts have erupted, and there have been calls for ethnic purity. This shows that the world still lacks a common moral concept and the means of developing it in a rational and sound way.

Such a concept should be based on consensus among our various societies, and it should be developed within the framework of our political experience

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

since the Second World War. It should also be based on an analysis of all that has been achieved and all that has not been achieved, with a view to assessing the role played by existing human-rights instruments and deciding whether to develop such instruments further or to replace them with new ones.

We need a new world social contract between various world communities, cultures and civilizations. This new social contract should be based not on one model, no matter how successful such a model may have proved to be, but on rules upon which there is common agreement and which take into consideration the intrinsic characteristics of various societies, with a view to devising the best framework for the achievement of unity through diversity. In this way, we would define "respect for human rights" with reference to a concept shared and approved by all - a concept that all would contract to implement.

The new world social contract for which we call - a contract linking parties from different civilizations and cultures - should be constructed within the framework of the new era in which neither globalism and nationalism nor commonality and individuality should be regarded as opposing trends, but should be discussed from the point of view of peaceful evolution, equilibrium and respect for the purposes of the Charter.

I strongly believe that calling for a new social contract is linked organically with the preventive diplomacy, participation in peacemaking and contribution to peace-keeping called for in the Agenda for Peace.

The vision that the Secretary-General has put forth last June in his Agenda for Peace reflects hope as much as it reflects challenges.

This vision embodies a call for the development of the role of the United Nations from one of mere crisis management and conflict resolution to a more comprehensive one which would embrace social, economic and humanitarian

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

issues. It is a vision that presents newly developed dimensions imposed by the nature of the profound changes now taking place in the patterns of international relations.

There should be a comprehensive and in-depth debate on this report and on the quintessence of this vision of the future. This debate should take place in the General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as in the various bodies of the United Nations, side by side with intensive examination in many other forums. It should involve research institutes in various States and continents, and should be aimed at reaching an acceptable formula to meet the political, security, economic and social requirements of the next stage in the history of the world.

This Agenda for Peace keeps hope alive and sets concrete goals. It is characterized by the fact that it does not ignore or overlook the realities of the situation. It strikes a balance between the possible and the desirable, and it constitutes a prelude to the major aim of adapting the existing instruments to the new realities.

The international community, which accepts - even calls for - greater responsibility in the resolution of global and regional conflicts, also calls for an effective role for the United Nations in preventing wars and making peace.

Respect for the United Nations involves, by definition, respect for its resolutions and the mobilization of its collective will to implement those resolutions with a view to imposing peace, if necessary, or negotiating peace if intentions are genuine and the parties concerned cooperate.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

In the midst of all this, we find the problems nay, problem of the third world which is one of the most important issues we have to discuss in this forum that brings together all the peoples and nations of the world.

In recent weeks the third world has convened a summit meeting in Indonesia, in the framework of the Non-Aligned Movement. President Soeharto addressed the Assembly in detail, yesterday, on the meeting, in his capacity as head of the Non-Aligned Movement. Today, I wish to dwell on a few points: first, the new world order should be based on solid foundations of law and on the principles of the Charter, as well as on an equitable sharing of responsibility and a joint commitment to cooperation and solidarity; secondly, the structure of that order should be dedicated to peace and justice, security and development and democracy at the domestic national levels, and in international relations, as well as to the promotion of the fundamental rights and freedoms of individual human beings and peoples;

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

thirdly, respect for sovereignty and adherence to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States as a principle that should not be impaired or diminished; fourthly, settlement of disputes by peaceful means and through continued dialogue and negotiation; fifthly, peace and stability are contingent on social and economic factors as much as they are contingent on political and military factors. Therefore, the diminishing prospects of economic development and social progress result in a serious threat to stability, and hence, to peace; sixthly, support for holding a world summit on social development that would put people and their social needs at the forefront of international efforts, and provide an opportunity to deal with the multi-faceted dimensions of social issues; seventhly, the United Nations, as the world embodiment of multilateralism, has a unique opportunity to be the international collective instrument for establishing a new world order based on justice and equality.

Herein lies the link between the Agenda for Peace and the hopes and aspirations of the third world for a positive role through which it would contribute to building the new world order. We believe that the establishment of this order cannot and should not be realized through imposition or coercion, but rather through a democratic process in which all peoples and States of the world would have a role and a say. This can be achieved only through this Organization: the United Nations.

In today's world, there exists a great tide towards disarmament and tangible progress towards agreement on its mechanisms and the achievement of its aims which, for long, have been sought by developed and developing nations alike. Third world States, represented by the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77, have made abundantly clear their determination to give priority

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

to disarmament issues, particularly nuclear disarmament, and the rechannelling of released resources to the areas of development and to the achievement of socio-economic progress.

Today, at this very same session, the new world is trying to take yet another step in that direction by introducing the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. Egypt, which was one of the first States that participated in drafting this Convention and which called for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, should like to present to the General Assembly our regional view of this Convention.

First, we are in favour of moving towards chemical-weapons disarmament in the framework of an international Convention that would constitute a part of an evolving and comprehensive process of disarmament towards general and complete disarmament, particularly of weapons of mass destruction;

Secondly, we agree with the framework and content of the Convention as presented by the Conference on Disarmament;

Thirdly, however, from our regional perspective, we consider that this Convention should not be dealt with in isolation from other efforts related to other weapons of mass destruction, mainly the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the international system of safeguards and inspection, and the provision of credible international guarantees;

Fourthly, we have a declared initiative regarding the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, including nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and other delivery systems. Therefore, our view of the Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons comes within this overall framework and is an integral part of it;

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

Fifthly, Middle East Arab and non-Arab States, with the exception of one, have joined the international system of inspection or the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Thus their support for the disarmament process is evident. However, the existing exception of one State gives rise to many security concerns, particularly as we know that this exception enables one State in the Middle East to possess nuclear weapons without any international restrictions. It also enables this State, which possesses a massive arsenal of military industries, to be engaged in a process of missile development in a manner that makes it an enshrined exception in the framework of the disarmament process. This greatly negates the effectiveness of all disarmament operational instruments and threatens the whole concept of regional and even international disarmament. It also restricts the freedom of the region's States in acceding to the Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons;

Sixthly, against this backdrop, the ministerial meeting of the League of Arab States conducted an in-depth discussion of this issue in mid-September. The meeting approved the following points as a basis for the Arab position towards the Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons: full willingness to deal with all disarmament proposals that would provide security through equal obligations applicable by one standard to all the States of the region; reaffirmation of full support for the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East, including nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as the best way to achieve security for all the States of the region; and willingness to deal with the Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons and the framework of efforts aiming at the establishment of the zone to the extent that the excepted State, namely Israel, would respond

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

to international calls to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to subject its nuclear facilities to the international safeguards system.

That is our position towards the Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. It is a position of support, but within the framework of an integrated disarmament process at the regional level in order to maintain the security of the Middle East States that are threatened by the existence of nuclear weapons in their region without any international control or legal obligation.

Still dealing with the Middle East region, I should like to say that the stage through which the region is passing now is characterized by many positive elements as well as negative ones.

In connection with the Middle East problem and the Palestine question, negotiations are currently under way, bilaterally and multilaterally, within the framework of a peace process based on the land-for-peace formula, and on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), adopted in the framework of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. They clearly provide for inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war, and thus safeguard the sovereign rights and territorial integrity of all, through withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967; and for the right of each State in the region to live in peace within its internationally guaranteed borders, thus ensuring security for all, Israel and Arab States alike.

In fact, the Government of Mr. Yitzhak Rabin has moved in the right direction, dissipating clouds of uncertainty and clearing the way for hope and

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

optimism. A basis of credibility has thus been created for the negotiations. That credibility was about to be lost indefinitely because of the actions of the previous Israeli Government and the former Prime Minister's statement that his intention was to procrastinate for 10 years.

However, it is not only the atmosphere of the negotiations that is important but also the content of those negotiations, particularly in view of the fact that the Arab parties, mainly Syria, have agreed to enter into comprehensive peace agreements with Israel, provided that the latter adheres to its obligations under the Charter, and international law as well as to the unanimous international resolutions that stipulate withdrawal to the international boundaries and the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

Egypt has set out in detail its integrated view of the components of a comprehensive peace based on the elements of security and justice in accordance with the following principles:

First, that the Arab-Israeli conflict in its entirety has four components: land, palestinian rights, security for all, and regional cooperation in the framework of peace;

Secondly, the need to implement the Security Council resolutions which represent the acceptable terms of reference for a negotiating process based on the formula of land for peace;

Thirdly, the special status of Al-Quds city does not prejudice the fact that East Jerusalem is a part of the territories occupied since mid-1967. The principles of any settlement are as applicable to it as they are to any other part of the occupied territories. Its future is not to be foreclosed nor decided upon unilaterally. Consequently, it represents an area of the peace negotiations, whether in the interim stage or in the final stage, of a Palestinian-Israeli settlement;

Fourthly, a settlement should be comprehensive for all fronts, including the Golan, Gaza and the West Bank, the Jordanian territories and South Lebanon, under Security Council resolution 425 (1978), and the behests of international legality.

Fifthly, interim arrangements in the context of the talks on full autonomy should be made without prejudice to the right of the Palestinian peoples to decide their own future and the exercise of their right to self determination;

Sixthly, the problem of the post-1948 war Palestinian refugees and the persons displaced after the 1967 war should be dealt with in conformity with resolutions based on international law and consensus based on good faith.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

The Egyptian view of a future Middle East within the context of new international relations, as well as the context of cultural affinity and the historical ties that bind all Arab States, together with Egypt's peaceful relations with Israel, enable Egypt to play an active role in the peace process and to provide some support for the negotiations to fulfill the legitimate demands called for under Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the land-for-peace formula. So much for the problem of the Middle East and Palestine.

As for the Gulf region, which is part of the Middle East, we witness new tensions caused by Iran's occupation of Arab islands, the latest of which was Abu-Moussa. This is a development we can neither overlook nor ignore. We therefore call upon Iran to reconsider its position on this issue, to adhere to the principles of good- neighbourliness, to respect the norms of international law and the sovereiegnty of States over their territories and to restore the situation to the status quo ante. We hope that the course of relations between Iran and the Arab peoples will be one of friendship, brotherhood and cooperation. These peoples have much in common to make them more united than otherwise.

Amidst these omens for the region, we in Egypt are concerned about the fate of all segments of the the Iraqi people and all parts of its land. Therefore, while we call upon the Iraqi Government to abide by the rules and decisions of international legality, we call upon the international community to safeguard Iraq's territorial integrity and the unity of its people. In the same way, we support Kuwait's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its international borders.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

As we discuss the major issues facing the world of today, I cannot but refer to the situation in Africa. The African continent, and particularly in the Horn of Africa, faces a range of political, economic and social problems. The situation cries out for increased attention to be paid to the continent on the part of the international community. In the meantime, the democratic changes in the continent and its States' awareness of the need for continental and regional cooperation gives us confidence that Africa has the capability to rise to the challenge. I therefore urge the international community to shoulder its reponsiblities towards implementing the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa in the 1990s in order to accelerate the transition to democracy and the economic and social development in the countries of the continent.

At the same time, progress in the process of eliminating apartheid is a positive aspect amidst such drawbacks. It should not be hampered by the attempts of racial extremists. The people of South Africa are on their way to exercising their legitimate rights. Incidents of violence or apostasy must not stop the positive evolution. Our responsiblity is to support the process of dialogue and negotiations in order to restore the momentum needed for achieving a democratic non-racial society in South Africa.

Last but not least, the situation in Somalia requires more than the mere humanitarian assistance to which we all contribute. What we need is to intensify efforts to achieve national reconciliation. While we call on the international community to continue its efforts in the humanitarian field, we call upon the Somali parties to rise to the responsibility of forging sound relations between them and discarding the trival rivalries and power struggles which show a lack of national awareness.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

By the same token, we stand firmly against aggression and in defence of respecting the sovereignty and independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina and are committed to stopping attempts at interference in its internal affiars, as well as the practices of "ethnic cleansing" committeed against its people, which reflect an attitude of inherited racial bigotry, intellectual backwardness and cultural regression. The demise of Yugoslavia, though regrettable in view of its past contributions to international life, makes it incumbent upon us to work for the respect of equal rights for all its peoples and all the States that have emanated from it, as all of them, not only one, are its successors in the world order. A view that has already been adopted by the General Assembly.

These are the issues that are of concern to us in Europe, Africa and Asia.

We are at the threshold of a world which looks forward to stabiity, but is in a transitional period in the course of which the map of tomorrow may be redrawn. Chaos may erupt and States, ethnic groupings, and terrorists may resort to force to an attempt to halt the march of history, civilization and progress. But the collective will shall open the doors to the United Nations and, thereby, will allow us to opt for a better tomorrow of unhampered economic development and social interdependence wherein we shall protect the environment, guided by the principles and obligations of the Rio de Janeiro summit meeting; a better tomorrow of respect for human rights; a better tomorrow that all of us will participate in bringing about for the sake of the world we aspire after in the twenty-first century.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.